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DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS NSC SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR PITTMAN
AND PEACE CORPS REGIONAL DIRECTOR MCKOY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/10/2017

TAGS: AMGT APER PREL SL

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR PERRY PRESENTS CREDENTIALS TO SIERRA
LEONE PRESIDENT KOROMA

Classified By: DCM S. Pratt, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) Ambassador Perry presented her credentials to President Ernest Bai Koroma on Monday, October 8, 2007 at State House in Freetown during an informal session. She also presented the Letters of Recall of her predecessor, Ambassador Thomas N. Hull, III. The meeting was attended by Vice President Sam Sam-Sumana, and MFA Director General Ambassador Umaru Wurie, Presidential Spokesman Alpha Kanu as well as DCM.

¶2. (C) After initial greetings, Ambassador Perry congratulated President Koroma on his winning of the presidency and the confidence he has inspired in others by his leadership. The Ambassador also referenced the congratulatory letter from President Bush. Koroma asked that she convey his deep thanks to the White House for the President's kind message.

¶3. (C) Ambassador Perry added that the American people very much support his leadership and initiatives. She noted that the U.S. wanted to assist Sierra Leone, within our ability, to move forward on strengthening democracy and building a solid economic base. Within that context, she looked forward to helping support President Koroma's goals. She stated that encouraging Sierraleonians to use the benefits available under AGOA and, hopefully, strengthening Sierra Leone over time to take advantage of the MCC Threshold program would be key goals of her tenure as Ambassador to Sierra Leone. She noted that she had come to Sierra Leone from Lesotho where the U.S. and that country had recently concluded a compact agreement. Citing her own experience with Peace Corps, Ambassador Perry said she looked forward to the program's re-entry to Sierra Leone at the appropriate time.

¶4. (C) President Koroma thanked the ambassador for the United States, ongoing interest in Sierra Leone. He outlined his goals of fighting corruption and developing the country's energy and economic sectors. He stated that the challenges of meeting high expectations among citizens were recognized. In order to signal his seriousness in addressing corruption, he plans to restructure the Anti-Corruption Commission to ensure its complete independence. With the support of partners like the U.S., Koroma said his government would make every effort to meet those expectations. For the present, he is confident that he has sent out clear signals, particularly in his October 5 address at the Opening of Parliament (septel), of the path he wants to take.

¶5. (C) President Koroma concluded by stating that he looks forward to working with Ambassador Perry and strengthening ties between the U.S. and Sierra Leone while working to establish democracy in Sierra Leone.

PERRY